

She previously served as the chair of the USA Rice Farmers board of directors, where she collaborated with growers across the country to solve difficult policy issues and strengthen the industry.

Today, U.S. rice farmers produce more rice using less land, energy, and water than they did just 20 years ago while providing critical habitats for many, many species.

With leaders such as Nicole, America's rice farmers continue to serve as leaders in farming by producing a very healthy, conservation-friendly food that generates jobs and economic opportunity in rural areas.

Congrats, Nicole, on this great honor.

#### SOCIAL SECURITY 2100: A SACRED TRUST

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Ms. KAPTUR). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 4, 2021, the gentleman from Connecticut (Mr. LARSON) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the majority leader.

Mr. LARSON of Connecticut. Madam Speaker, I rise this afternoon to use this hour to discuss "Social Security 2100: A Sacred Trust," or, as Martin Luther King would remind us, the fierce urgency of now and Congress' need to act on Social Security.

Let me start with the fact that Social Security is the Nation's number one insurance program, the number one insurance program that some on the other side call an entitlement. There is nothing further from the truth, and this is easily verifiable. All you have to do is look at your pay stub. It says FICA. FICA stands for Federal Insurance Contributions Act. Whose contribution? Every citizen in the United States who pays into the program.

It is an earned benefit, and one that has never missed a payment. It is a guarantee, and that is why it is so vitally important to every American citizen.

Congress has been negligent. It has been 50 years since there has been an enhancement to the program. It has been more than 38 years since there was an attempt at solvency. Yet, 38 years ago, Congress enacted a cut that will take place this January.

The time to act is now. No more procrastination. For all of our C-SPAN listeners, make sure that you contact your Member of Congress in both Houses.

We are pleased that 200-plus people are original cosponsors of the bill. You will hear from some of them today.

We have taken the liberty of pointing out to every Member of Congress how many people in their district receive Social Security benefits and what that brings into their district on a monthly basis. I assure you, there is no more greater economic development plan for Members' districts than what happens on a monthly basis to those who need it most.

Let me reiterate again: Social Security is the number one antipoverty program for the elderly and the number one antipoverty program for children as well.

I have here, Madam Speaker, something we have done for every Member of Congress. In this case, we are illustrating our great leader, Representative JIM CLYBURN, who is a proud cosponsor of this bill.

In his district, in South Carolina's Sixth, there are 149,433 Social Security recipients who receive \$189 million in monthly benefits. That is monthly benefits. There are 1.2 million Social Security recipients in South Carolina who receive \$1.7 billion in monthly benefits as well.

For about half of senior beneficiaries, Social Security provides a majority of their income. Now imagine that, for half the seniors in the country, Social Security provides a majority of their benefits, yet there hasn't been an enhancement or an increase in over 50 years in a COLA. That doesn't even come remotely close to what people need.

For more than a quarter of our seniors, it provides 90 percent or more of their income, 90 percent for a quarter of our seniors. At a time when the wealth disparity is the greatest it has ever been in our country, the wealthiest nation in the world, there are 5 million of our fellow Americans, mostly women, who receive a below-poverty level check from their government.

□ 1630

Why? Because Congress hasn't acted. This isn't something the President can do through executive order, nor is this something that the Supreme Court is going to adjudicate. This is the responsibility of the United States Congress.

I am proud that we had a hearing the other day in the Ways and Means Committee that we are going to bring to a markup and ultimately to the floor of this House: Social Security 2100. I am proud of the fact that we have a President of the United States who refers to Social Security as a sacred trust, a sacred trust between the government and their people. And Social Security has never failed. It has never missed a payment.

It used to be—and Mr. CARTWRIGHT from Pennsylvania knows this—that we could go back to 1935 to explain why Roosevelt back then, in the midst of the Great Depression, put forward Social Security because of the devastation that had taken place in 1929 during the great crash.

But Members on this floor, Members in this Congress understand all too well that we only have to go back to 2008, 2009 during the Great Recession when people saw their 401(k) become a 101(k) where people lost their benefits. And that coupled with the great pandemic, this roller coaster of a pandemic that we are living through now has only further underscored the need for us to enhance the Nation's number one insurance program.

And during that same time, during that recession that they witnessed their funds depleted and devastated or lost altogether or during layoffs that have occurred through no fault of their own, Social Security has never missed a payment. Not a pension payment, not a spousal payment, not dependent coverage, nor disability.

Madam Speaker, it might surprise some of our viewers and listeners that more veterans depend on Social Security disability than they do on the VA. And it is because Social Security provides these benefits and especially for our veterans. People in this Chamber and in the Senate take great pride in talking about our veterans on Memorial Day and Veterans Day, and rightfully so, and saluting them and saying what a grateful Nation we are.

Well, if we are truly a grateful Nation, then it is time we end the more than 50 years of neglect and make sure that our veterans are able to get the benefits that they richly deserve without 5-month delays, in making sure that they have disability that they know they can rely on, that works for the times that we are living through currently.

Children continue to rely on Social Security, and it is the number one antipoverty program for children. And you know what, 10,000 baby boomers a day become eligible for Social Security, and millennials will need the benefit more than baby boomers. Millennials have been put in the position where they have less money to be able to afford private pensions, where they have been burdened with college loan debt, where they are unable to get the kind of mortgages their parents enjoyed, and, in fact, have incomes that are below that level, and so, Social Security becomes their salvation. But it can't be their salvation if they are locked at the bottom, and we are not making the benefit increases that will provide that opportunity for all generations to enjoy.

Madam Speaker, we are pleased also that Social Security 2100 will not only lift benefits across the board, but it will make sure that no one can work all their lives, pay into a system and retire into poverty. More than 5 million Americans get a below-poverty-level check from the government after having paid in all their lives. That is unfair. That is unjust. That is flat out wrong. We are a body that can pass out trillions of dollars of tax cuts to the Nation's wealthiest 1 percent and yet we can't take care of people who have paid into the system because Congress has not fulfilled its obligation and responsibility.

Now is the time to act, and under Democratic leadership, that will take place. People say to me often, "Well, what is different?"

What is different is: we have a Democratic House, a Democratic Senate, and most importantly, a President who believes that this is a sacred trust. A President, as MATT CARTWRIGHT also

knows, who has said we are going to end WEP and GPO.

And for you listeners, for you viewers, that means for all you schoolteachers, for you firefighters, for you police officers, for you municipal employees that were penalized under a system who have worked hard and played by the rules, the President has called for its repeal, and that means benefits flowing to people who rightfully deserve them and should rightfully get them.

I would add that that has had bipartisan support in the Congress, and we do have bipartisan support for this bill across the Nation. No one yet on the other side has signed up, but yet, all across the Nation in large numbers more than 80 percent of Democrats, more than 68 percent of Republicans and more than 74 percent of Independents all favor increasing benefits because they know of the security and the promise and the necessity of Social Security.

I yield to the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. CARTWRIGHT) who is an original cosponsor, Madam Speaker, of this Social Security 2100, as are you, who understands how critical this is to Pennsylvanians and everyone across the Nation.

Mr. CARTWRIGHT. Madam Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding. I thank the gentleman particularly not only for authoring and helping out all the rest of us cosponsor this important legislation, but in particular for mentioning the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania here late this afternoon.

It was Pennsylvania that was instrumental in actually passing the Social Security Act back in the thirties. It was a huge fight. It was a time when Republicans called the concept of Social Security, Madam Speaker, communism. They called it that. They said it would lead to horrible things. They said it would be the ruination of the American economy and the American democracy, and it was communism. That is what the Republicans called the whole idea of Social Security when the Roosevelt administration came up with it.

And the Roosevelt administration was having a huge fight with the Republican-dominated Supreme Court of the United States. They were against it. And they kept ruling that Roosevelt's programs, the National Labor Relations Act, all of these programs that Roosevelt came up with, the Securities and Exchange Commission, all of these programs that Roosevelt came up with to try to work our way out of the Great Depression, the Supreme Court was invalidating as unconstitutional under the Commerce Clause.

And it was actually a member of the United States Supreme Court, a Republican member named Owen J. Roberts who saved the day, Congressman LARSON. He saved the day because he changed his mind about the commerce clause and how it applied to the Social Security Act.

Owen J. Roberts was a terrific trial lawyer from Philadelphia. He was a prosecutor. He was in the U.S. Attorney's Office. And he personally handled the Teapot Dome scandal. He prosecuted the criminals who perpetrated the Teapot Dome scandal back in the twenties.

And his career flourished. He started a law firm where I actually practiced for 2 years as a young lawyer myself in Philadelphia. And Owen J. Roberts went on to join the Supreme Court of the United States as an associate justice, he was one of the Republican members.

There was great controversy about whether Social Security would be ruled constitutional. Roberts thought about it, and to his great and everlasting credit and to the credit of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, he changed his mind. He changed his mind, and he validated the Social Security Act. And as a result, it was signed into law and it was held constitutional.

The Social Security Administration took off, and all of a sudden, American life included this promise, as the gentleman stated, a sacred trust. This promise that if you work your whole life, you pay into the system, you pay your FICA taxes all the way through, you continue to pay every quarter all the way through your career, that is the promise, that when you retire you will not be left destitute. You will not be relegated to poverty and to privation, that you will have food on your table and a roof over your head because you will have money coming in that is your money. It is your money. You paid into it. It is not the government, it is an insurance program, as the gentleman from Connecticut astutely noted. And it is a promise that has been kept every day, every week, every month since the 1930s. We are talking about 80 years of keeping a promise for Social Security.

In my district it makes a very big difference. The gentleman from Connecticut is right. There is an awful lot of people who are over the age of retirement who are depending entirely on Social Security checks to survive. Yes, in some places it is around 25 percent, that might be the average. But I can tell you that there are places that are hurting in this country where the people surviving on Social Security checks and nothing else coming in approaches 40 or 50 percent.

You can see who it is, and you feel for them, and you know that every year they see what they call the COLA increases, the cost-of-living adjustment increases. It is all worked out by a mathematical formula. It is called CPI, and it is the Consumer Price Index, and it rises in accordance with what formula is used.

Over the years, Social Security has been attacked by Republicans. It was attacked savagely at the outset as communism. In the first decade of this millennium, the Republicans wanted to

privatize Social Security, make it so that the money went into the stock market.

Now, imagine that, into the stock market.

And then when we had this enormous stock market crash in 2008, the retirement savings of all of these people who paid into this wonderful insurance program for retirement would have been wiped out. But it was Democrats who fought day in and day out in that time. You were there, Mr. LARSON.

Mr. LARSON of Connecticut. During that time, our current Speaker led the fight when George Bush said he was going to use his political capital that they had just gained and were in control of the House, the Senate, and the Presidency, they were going to privatize Social Security. And it was NANCY PELOSI and people like MARCY KAPTUR that led the charge in the fight that prevented the privatization of Social Security.

To your point, had that gone into effect, people's total savings and everything that is a guarantee under Social Security would have been lost in 2008.

We are beyond 2008 now, but we are still dealing with all of those things that people can't necessarily prepare for, whether it is a pandemic or whether it is the Great Recession or whether it is the vicissitudes of the stock market, as Roosevelt would have said. These are the things that people who work hard and play by the rules are subject to, and that is why this is a sacred trust. Because in the United States we will not let that happen to our citizens because nobody deserves to work all their lives and retire into poverty.

I thank the gentleman for his leadership in this area.

□ 1645

Mr. CARTWRIGHT. The gentleman is exactly correct. It was an attempt to privatize Social Security in those years. And it was only by the stalwart, staunch defense of the Social Security system by the Democrats—Democrats present here in this Chamber today—who did that and fought it off. And thank God they did.

Because it is true, the stock market crash of 2000 would have thrown millions and millions of seniors right into poverty if the Republicans had got away with it, had privatized Social Security.

And it did not stop there. I was not in Congress in those years, but I came into Congress. I was elected in 2012. And in 2013, I was sworn in for the first time. And here I am, a freshman Democrat, and about 4 months into my very first term, something happened. The Republicans were pushing this scheme called chained CPI. And chained CPI was a \$50 expression that means lower cost of living adjustment increases, lower increases year after year.

The idea was, well, we have to make ends meet at Social Security so let's cut increases for seniors. That was

their plan. And they called that chained CPI.

Now, there was a big fight over that, of course. And at least at that point, the Republicans weren't calling Social Security communism, but they were still trying to cut it for seniors, and that is no good. And the Democrats fought back hard against that.

Well, along comes 2013, and in the springtime, the President comes out with a budget. And President Obama at the time, he wanted to extend an olive branch to the Republicans, it might be recalled. And President Obama incorporated this chained CPI notion in his budget. He put that in his budget.

I wasn't having it. I joined a bunch of people—I think the congressman from Connecticut was with me—and we went out on the lawn of the Capitol to protest against the President of the United States, a Democratic President of the United States extending this olive branch to the Republicans by putting chained CPI in his budget. We were protesting. We Democrats were protesting against a Democratic President going along with that notion just to try to get along with the Republicans.

In the end, to his everlasting credit, President Obama withdrew that offer and never brought it up again. And now, under Social Security 2100, there is a real cost of living adjustment formula in there, something that actually takes into account the things that seniors has to buy; the things that seniors can't afford unless they get the increase; the things that seniors need to live in any kind of reasonable style of living. There is a reasonable cost of living adjustment in Social Security 2100, and I am proud to be on that bill.

Look, workers paid into this fund all their careers; it is their money. And the promise is not that you will get some money, the promise is that you are going to get enough money to make it out of poverty in your retirement. And if you have other things coming in, fine, but there are people who rely entirely—that is their sole source of support—the Social Security checks that they get.

Madam Speaker, in my district, 140,000 people, relying on those Social Security checks coming in. And my suggestion this evening, as we talk about Social Security 2100, let's pass it and keep the promise.

Mr. LARSON of Connecticut. Madam Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Pennsylvania for joining us this afternoon.

Madam Speaker, I would point out a couple of things, something the gentleman knows—and we have been joined by the gentlewoman from Illinois, who will address us shortly—but the number of groups that are endorsing Social Security 2100:

The National Committee to Preserve Social Security and Medicare, Social Security Works, the Alliance for Retired Americans, the Paralyzed Veterans of America, the NAACP, the Na-

tional Organization for Women, Latinos for Secure Retirement, the National Education Association, AFGE, the American Federation of Teachers, The Arc of the United States, National Retiree Legislative Network, the Gray Panthers, American Family Voices, The Senior Citizens League. And the list goes on and on and on, because everybody understands the importance and significance of this.

Madam Speaker, I recognize the gentlewoman from Illinois, who has worked tirelessly on behalf of seniors across this country, and has headed a task force for more than a decade now that was instrumental in providing us with all the detailed information with the over 17 proposals that are included in Social Security 2100, a sacred trust.

Madam Speaker, we make this point often, and I want to make it here tonight, because you are well-aware of this as well. That in legislative parlance, the bill is called H.R. 5723. But what I want our viewers, our listeners, and most importantly, our colleagues on the other side of the aisle to understand, this is about your parents. This is about your brothers and sisters, your aunts and uncles. This is about your next-door neighbor, your coworker, the people that you worship with.

This is not legislative parlance, this is the reality that they are living; and the disparity that exists today, the gap that exists, can be closed if Congress does a job that it has neglected for more than 50 years in terms of enhancing a program that is a necessity for your parents, for your brothers and sisters, for your aunts and uncles. All you have to do is ask them. It confounds me that anyone can look their constituents in the eye and say that we are doing enough for you, or that you are okay.

We all know, and I have heard Jan say this many times—I know my mother said it—she says, Oh, I just care that my children are okay, and I just don't want to be a burden. Of course people feel that way. It is their humility and their kind of generation and people that we know. Nobody wants to be a burden. But I assured my mother she was no burden. She was an inspiration. And for us to stand by in the midst of this, the wealthiest Nation in the world, and not do our responsibility as a Congress and vote.

The President can't do it by executive order, nor will the Supreme Court adjudicate it. It is only Congress. And thanks to the efforts of JAN SCHAKOWSKY, we are getting there.

Madam Speaker, I yield to the gentlewoman from Illinois (Ms. SCHAKOWSKY).

Ms. SCHAKOWSKY. Madam Speaker, I thank my brother for yielding.

Madam Speaker, JOHN LARSON and I came into the Congress together, elected in 1998 to be here. But I want you to know, JOHN, that I have been working on issues of Social Security since the 1970s—well before I was eligible for Social Security.

When I was an organizer in Chicago, one of my first organizing efforts was to help establish Metro Seniors in Action, an organization in the city of Chicago of older Americans. I will tell you what, JOHN, I learned a lot from them. One of them was courage to stand up to power, to not be afraid of the old Mayor Daley in Chicago, not to be afraid of anyone, to stand up for rights. One of those priorities then, as well, was making sure that Social Security was solid.

Now that you have talked about the Alliance for Retired Americans, I was the executive director of the chapter of that in the State of Illinois throughout most of the 1980s until I ran for the legislature in 1990. And again, we were fighting—I remember well—to protect Social Security.

Well, guess what? Now, we are not just talking about protecting Social Security, but we did have a battle when George W. Bush decided that he thought privatizing Social Security was a good idea. Well, all over the country we organized, seniors organized, the Democrats organized, to make sure that privatizing Social Security, which would have jeopardized the security of that benefit—and actually, let me correct that for a minute.

You know, many people call Social Security an entitlement. This is something that people in every paycheck that they have had is paid for. This is a program that is paid for out of the pocket of workers and has to be there when they retire. This is not some sort of a gift from the American people. This is something that has been earned by the American people.

But we won that battle with George W. Bush because that was not the direction that the majority of Americans—Democrats, Republicans, rural, urban—wanted. They wanted to make sure that Social Security was reliably there. But it was always to protect Social Security. And now, thank you, JOHN LARSON, because now we are talking about improving Social Security benefits. And isn't it about time?

Right now, the majority of Americans get more than half of their income from Social Security. When Franklin D. Roosevelt first talked about Social Security, it was thought of as a three-legged stool.

Did you talk about that already?

Mr. LARSON of Connecticut. No.

Ms. SCHAKOWSKY. Okay. So the first was people's savings. You know what? There is hardly any savings anymore for the elderly. And actually, for most Americans, hardly have any money, unfortunately, that has been put away, because average wages, compared to the wealthiest people, have gone down.

The second was pensions. Remember that? There were pensions. People would have that guaranteed retirement benefit from the work. Those are largely gone. And then, Social Security to help along. Well, now it is mostly about Social Security. More than half

of Americans rely on Social Security for more than half of their income. And a quarter of seniors now rely on Social Security for 90 percent or more of their income. You need Social Security to survive.

But let's talk about what survival is. The average monthly Social Security check is \$1,543 per month. Who can live on that? I mean, it is really a struggle, at the very best, to be able to even make it. That is it—\$1,543 a month.

So the gentleman's legislation is so incredibly important. And you talked about grandparents. Well, you know, plenty of us in the Congress now are also Social Security-eligible. And those who are not, are thinking about their parents and loved ones. But I also want to point out that two of my grandchildren benefited from Social Security because, sadly, their mother had died. And so they were eligible for benefits that helped them to be able to continue with their education.

So it is a family plan. Social Security is a necessity. And for a long time we have also been talking about women, particularly women, people who have left the workforce to become caregivers. But there has been no help for them, even though they haven't been able to pay into Social Security.

□ 1700

I now understand that there will be a provision for a caregiver credit?

Mr. LARSON of Connecticut. Correct.

Ms. SCHAKOWSKY. I thank so much; for people who have taken time out of the workplace. Many of us have heard from public employees, including school teachers, who have lost Social Security benefits due to the so-called windfall elimination provision that has meant unfairly that they have lost Social Security benefits.

Finally, after years and years and years of fighting, that unfairness will be gone because of your legislation.

Mr. LARSON of Connecticut. Madam Speaker, this has been bipartisan. Chairman NEAL, a Social Security recipient himself lost his father, lost his mother, his grandmother was then raising him, and then he lost his grandmother.

TOM REED, the ranking member on the Social Security Subcommittee, and TOM RICE, they both lost parents and were raised on Social Security as well.

Mr. DAVIS has put a bill in and has sponsored a bill for a number of years to eliminate the windfall elimination provision.

Finally, President Biden said we are going to repeal this in its entirety. It shows that there is an ability, a bridge to come together in so many of these things, including caregiver opportunities, that are bipartisanly-sponsored within this bill and included as part of the bill.

We have yet to have anyone endorse and support the bill, but that is a matter, I think, of voting and getting beyond what happens in this Chamber

and in discussions between here and the Senate is that there is an awful lot of talk about helping veterans, but nobody actually votes one way or the other. There is an awful lot of talk about understanding what we have to do, but then nobody votes.

The time for reckoning, this is a point President Biden makes all the time, and I know, Madam Speaker, you understand this as well. Our very democracy and our Republic is at stake here because government, in an entrepreneurial capitalistic system like ours, where there has to be, by the nature of the system, risk that is taken. Well, that is important and good, but by the same token, Roosevelt and subsequent Presidents, including Eisenhower, including Nixon, and including Reagan, recognized this. We need that safety net there for people who work hard and play by the rules.

President Biden has said, yes, this is a sacred trust. Martin Luther King came to Washington, D.C. in 1963 during the famous march, and gave us the phrase, "the fierce urgency of now." He was talking at the time about segregation and about the need for voting rights.

But the fierce urgency of now applies to all of our citizens that have been addressed in the remarks, who need this and who are suffering and receiving below poverty level payments from their own government after they have paid in. This is at a time when we gave the Nation's wealthiest 1 percent an 83 percent tax cut. God bless them.

It hasn't trickled down to everybody else. That is why we have the system that we do to take care of. It is the government's responsibility. And if a democracy is going to work, if we are not listening to what, as all the polls say, and we have accompanied more than six different polls talking about where the America people are, this is not partisan. This is totally bipartisan in terms of people's understanding of what their needs, their belief in a system they know that has never failed for them.

Dr. Martin Luther King said: Now is the time to make real the promise of democracy. Now is the time to make good on the promise of the Federal Government. That is what Joe Biden has said and what he so eloquently has called a sacred trust. Now is the time for us.

This is beyond urgent, though it is the fierce urgency of now. It is shameful that this body, the world looks in on this great Nation, this great democracy that we have, it looks how we treat our people; how we treat our veterans; how we treat our children. The statistics that you rallied off about what is going on in this country and how they are depending on it, and then realizing that Congress hasn't done a thing in 50 years?

This is not anything that can be done—and I repeat this again—by executive order or by adjudication from the Supreme Court. This is the responsi-

bility of every man and woman in this Chamber, of 535 of us overall, but it is our responsibility and the time to vote is long overdue.

Madam Speaker, I yield to the gentlewoman from Illinois.

Ms. SCHAKOWSKY. Madam Speaker, let me just close with this. We are going to hear, oh, well, you know, too much money. We can't afford to increase the benefits. I think it is important to remind people that Social Security was born during the greatest depression that this country had ever seen.

It was from the understanding of the President at that time, President Roosevelt, who understood that we cannot have poorhouses for older Americans. That this country, if we can't afford to do that, then we cannot call ourselves a real democracy, a country that really cares for people.

At this point we are the richest country in the world; the richest country ever on the planet. Now is the time when we need to do this. There is absolutely no excuse. You have said about the urgency of now. This is a moment of opportunity, and we should not make the mistake of overlooking it.

We have got everything in place. We have got your bill. We have got a President. It is time now to engage everyone in this country to say yes. Let's make improvements to one of the greatest things that ever happened in the United States, the greatest treasures that we have, and that is Social Security.

Let's make it even better. God bless you for leading the way on this. I am so proud to be helpful in any way that I can to be a partner with you. We can do this.

Mr. LARSON of Connecticut. Madam Speaker, we can do this. I think Martin Luther King coined a phrase as well, and I am paraphrasing here: This is not the time for the tranquilizing drug of gradualism. This is not the time in the face of so much inequality and inequity. That is when problems happen in society, when the people see that their government has not lived up to its responsibility.

As noted, they pay into the system weekly, biweekly, or monthly. Our good colleague and friend, John Lewis, said: This is not only an important issue in terms of our people, this is a civil rights issue. He said and believed that with every fiber in his being because what he saw is the people that were discriminated against were the low wage earners.

Unfortunately, as you know and have spoken eloquently on, most of them are women, and specifically, women of color. So whether you had a job as a waitress or a seamstress or whether you were one of those caregivers that everybody relies on, or whether you had to go home to provide care for your family and you didn't pay into a system, or your wage level, long before pay equity, was far lower than your male counterpart, this is not a reason

you should live out your remaining days in poverty. This happens for 5 million Americans.

In a blink of an eye we can do a tax cut. In a blink of an eye we can pass a defense bill. I support both. But I fervently support the fact that we have to take care of our citizens. It is this body's responsibility, Congress' responsibility. We cannot walk away.

Every citizen in this country ought to make sure that they are holding their congressional delegations responsible for doing their job. This is nothing that should be kicked down the road again or put off to some gradual dealing with the subject matter, or yet, another study that we are going to try to look into this on.

We don't need to study this. We know what the issue is here. We have looked in the mirror, and the problem is the United States Congress, it is the body that votes and changes the policy and the direction.

Madam Speaker, I thank the gentlewoman for joining us.

#### GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. LARSON of Connecticut. Madam Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on the subject of our Special Order today, Social Security 2100, a Special Trust.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Connecticut?

There was no objection.

Mr. LARSON of Connecticut. Madam Speaker, I want to thank as well President Biden for having the temerity to not only on the campaign trail, but to speak directly to the American people and let them, and ensure them, that we understand that this is a sacred trust, a bond that will not be broken. Not on our watch. That we will fulfill that promise and make sure that they are receiving the kind of benefits that they have paid into a system for and are, yes, entitled to receive because there is no greater Nation in the world than the United States of America.

When this body sets its mind to it, as witnessed how bipartisan the public feels about this on the outside and a number of the great inclusions that both Democrats and Republicans feel about, now is the time for us to act on behalf of the citizens we are sworn to serve.

Madam Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

□ 1715

#### REFLECTING ON AND HONORING THE ACTIONS AND ACCOMPLISHMENTS OF THE HONORABLE ROBERT J. DOLE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 4, 2021, the gentleman from Kansas (Mr. ESTES) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the minority leader.

#### GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. ESTES. Madam Speaker, I ask unanimous consent for all Members to have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks and include any extraneous material on the subject of this Special Order.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Kansas?

There was no objection.

Mr. ESTES. Madam Speaker, tonight lying in state in the rotunda of this Capitol Building is Robert Joseph Dole. Bob Dole was an American statesman, a former Member of this House of Representatives, a former U.S. Senator, a World War II veteran, a tireless fighter for what is right, and, last but not least, a Kansan.

Tonight, we want to reflect on and honor the actions and accomplishments of this great American hero. Today, I am here with my colleagues from the Sunflower State and other Members of the House of Representatives to honor Robert Joseph Dole, one of the finest Americans to ever serve in this institution.

Bob Dole has a record of devotion and service to this country—a World War II hero, the majority leader of the Senate, and a Republican nominee for President. But to truly understand the man Bob was, Madam Speaker, you have to know a bit about where he was from because out of all the things Bob did and accomplished through his long life, I know that Bob always epitomized what it meant to be a son of Kansas.

Our State is situated in the very heart of our great Nation, more than 1,000 miles west of Washington. It is imbibed with a strong sense of freedom and with great compassion for our fellow man. The vivid sunsets of amber waves of grain are a constant reminder of the beauty and grace that only come from a loving God. And our climate, which can include some of the harshest winters or cloudless summers, produces hardy people who are resolute, undeterred, and quick to adapt to any challenges they may face.

It is from Kansas where Bob Dole first entered the world in the summer of 1923.

A natural athlete, he was recruited by famed basketball coach Phog Allen and was a Jayhawk basketball player and football player, and he ran track at the University of Kansas. But the grave threats against our freedom and our Nation called Bob away from his studies at KU and placed him in battle overseas during World War II.

His enlistment in the United States Army would take him far from the flat plains of Kansas to another continent, and he returned to the shores of America with two Purple Hearts, a Bronze Star, and scars of war.

Permanent damage would restrict him to a hospital for more than a year and limit the mobility in his right arm for the rest of his life. Bob Dole's service to our country during World War II

is more than most of us will ever give back to the country in our entire lifetime.

But Bob wasn't done yet. After returning to school, this time at Washburn University in Topeka, he served in the Kansas House of Representatives and then as Russell County attorney.

In 1961, Bob Dole brought his grit, optimism, and wit to the Chamber we are standing in today, having been elected by Kansans of the Sixth District, and then again by the First District after redistricting. He represented Kansas in the people's House for 8 years before the entire Sunflower State sent him across the Capitol to the Senate. His passion for the United States, ability to bring colleagues together, and sense of humor elevated him to lead the Republican Party.

But Dole would also seek to serve the American people from 1600 Pennsylvania Avenue. He was the running mate to President Gerald Ford and eventually earned the respect of voters across the country to be the Republican nominee for President. It was at that time that he left the Senate, noting that the next chapter of his life would either be in the White House or a return to his beloved home State of Kansas. As votes were tallied on November 5, 1996, it became clear that Russell, Kansas, would welcome their son home.

But I can tell you with certainty, Madam Speaker, that his commitment to the United States did not end with electoral defeat, as he continued to stay active in the causes he fought for as a public servant and remained a critical activist in Kansas politics.

Madam Speaker, most of the Representatives in this Chamber are familiar with Bob Dole as a war hero, a statesman, and a Presidential nominee. But I had the privilege of traveling throughout Kansas with him. While the country has gotten to know Bob on the Senate floor or the campaign trail, I saw Bob in small towns and coffee shops with small business owners and farmers.

My wife, Susan, and I were blessed to have known Bob and his wife, Elizabeth—another dedicated public servant—and to witness his genuine warmth and devotion firsthand.

In his farewell address to the Senate on June 11, 1996, Senator Dole quoted the opening verse to Ecclesiastes chapter 3, saying: "To everything there is a season." He went on to say that his season in the Senate was about to end. Today, we recognize that another season for Bob Dole has come to a close.

The Scripture that Bob started to read from continues, saying, "a time to be born and a time to die." And later, it says, "a time to weep and a time to laugh; a time to mourn and a time to dance."

This week is a time for mourning. We grieve the loss of our friend, and we pray for his beloved wife, Elizabeth, and daughter, Robin.